

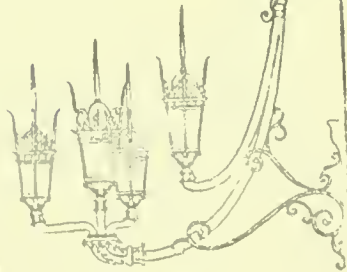
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U.S. CUSTOM HOUSE

REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

MARITIME - WHYDAH MUSEUM

February 5, 1988





COUNCILOR BRIAN McLAUGHLIN
BOSTON CITY COUNCIL
BOSTON CITY HALL
ONE CITY HALL PLAZA
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 5th FLOOR
BOSTON, MA 02201

A. LETTER OF INTEREST

February 5, 1988

Mr. Stephen Coyle
Director
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, Massachusetts 02201

Dear Mr. Coyle:

In April, 1717, the pirate ship, Whydah, sank in a storm off the coast of Wellfleet. Maritime Explorations, Inc. discovered the Whydah and has excavated over 80,000 artifacts, to date, under auspices of the Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources of Massachusetts (the Board).

The redeveloper, Maritime Whydah Associates, proposes to establish a museum in the U.S. Customs House to display the Whydah, making Boston the home of the only pirate ship found anywhere in the world. After engaging the architectural firm of Benjamin Thompson and Associates (master planners of Faneuil Hall) to provide the architectural feasibility of the Maritime Whydah Museum in the Customs House, the redeveloper obtained approval from the Massachusetts Underwater Archaeological Board to move the Whydah artifacts to the Customs House. The museum would occupy the first four floors with the remaining tower being redeveloped into executive office suites, including the world headquarters for Maritime Explorations, Inc. The Museum of Science, Peabody Museum and the Peabody Museum of Salem will assist in developing and operating the museum. In addition to the Whydah, marine technology, oceanographic displays and other discoveries of Maritime Explorations, Inc. would be displayed, including artifacts from the Hussar, a British man-o-war recently discovered in the East River of New York. More importantly, the museum would develop an ongoing educational program in conjunction with the Boston Public School system that would utilize the excitement and interest of pirate folklore to explore several related subjects i.e. American History, Navigation, Archaeology and Oceanography.

Maritime Whydah Associates Redevelopment Team consists of the following:

Redevelopment Team:

- * Office Developer
Conroy-Heafitz Development Company
- * Cultural Use
Maritime-Whydah Museum
Maritime Explorers, Inc.
- * Museum Concept and Operations
Museum of Science
Peabody Museum
Peabody Museum of Salem
- * Architect
Benjamin Thompson and Associates
- * Project Consultant
Bay State Investors, Inc.
Thomas P. O'Neill III
Christine M. Dunn
- * Historic Structures Consultant
Robert Neiley Associates
- * Traffic Consultant
Vanesse-Hangen
- * Museum Consultant
Christopher Lowery, Former President,
South Street Seaport Museum and
Development Corporation
- * Display Exhibit Consultant
WED Designs (Walter E. Disney)
- * Educational Consultant
Ina Heafitz

Summary:

Maritime Whydah Associates are very eager to redevelop this property in conjunction with the goals of the City of Boston and the Boston Redevelopment Authority. We feel this team brings to the project:

- * A unique familiarity with the redevelopment goals of the City.
- * Extensive experience in developing and designing space for public use.
- * An original and fascinating cultural use which is appealing from an educational standpoint.
- * A commitment to creating a sensitive renovation for one of Boston's most outstanding landmarks.

The function of the Customs House has always been closely tied to the sea, to maritime activity and coastal trade.

This is a unique opportunity for Boston to focus national attention on a Boston landmark building while at the same time, giving the people of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts an opportunity to feel, touch and become part of our maritime history.

Sincerely,

TERENCE CONROY

LEWIS HEAFITZ

BENJAMIN THOMPSON & ASSOCIATES, INC.

ONE STORY STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MASS. 02138 • TEL. 617-876-4300 • TWX 710 3200 172

February 4, 1988

Mr. Stephen Coyle
Director
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Mr. Coyle:

BTA is pleased to join Conroy Heafitz and Maritime Explorations, Inc., in submitting our qualifications and proposal for re-use of the U.S. Customs House on Boston's State Street.

For several years I have been meeting with Barry Clifford of Maritime Explorations to discuss a museum to house his invaluable treasury of excavated Whydah artifacts. We have considered various locations of national and local importance. When the Customs House opportunity opened up, we were immediately struck by the apt relationship between the historic building and the history-making story of the Whydah.

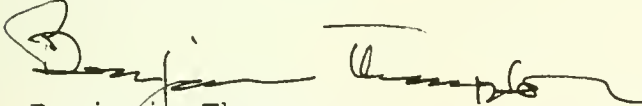
The Customs House is the fitting place to present the story of the Whydah against a backdrop of marine and colonial life in pre-Revolutionary Boston. The Whydah's tale and awesome treasury -- tying together the themes of maritime history and modern exploration -- are a fitting feature to reanimate the restored Customs House. The Whydah/Maritime Museum would be a destination with historic depth, esthetic substance, dramatic scope, and broad public appeal. Its presence here would be a national "first" for Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Our interest in the area goes back to the 1960's, the days when Boston was formulating its master plan for Government Center and the Waterfront. During that period I worked on a proposal for restoration of the Sears Crescent and became intrigued with the potential of the decayed market area. In 1967, we submitted to the BRA a comprehensive proposal for revitalizing the "Quincy Market" blocks. In 1970, responding to the R.F.P., we submitted the

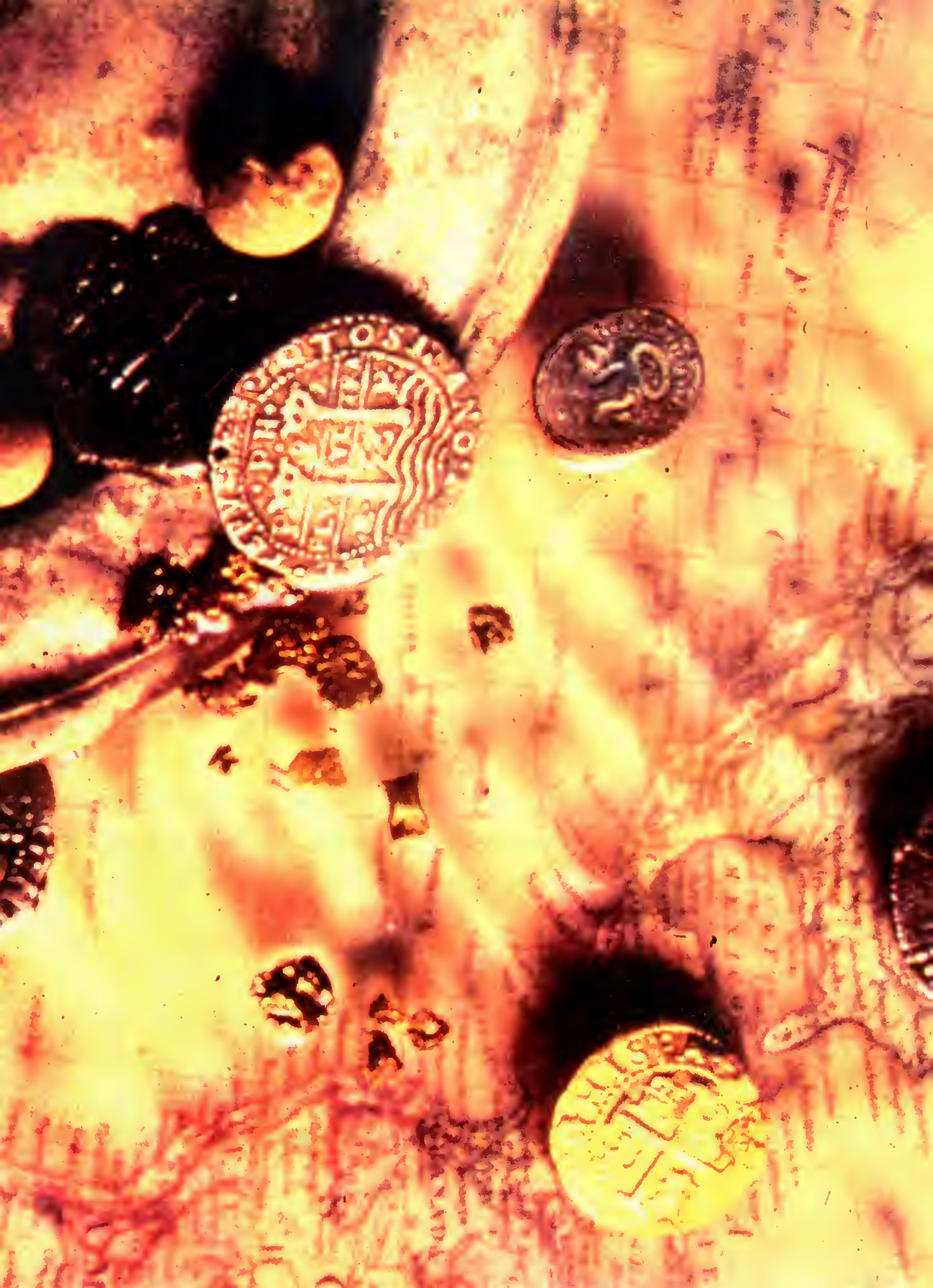
detailed plan that was ultimately selected for development and was completed in 1978. For the past decade I have retained a strong civic, architectural, and personal interest in the area, always hopeful that the Customs House would be transformed into a place adding to the vitality and public enjoyment of the historic waterfront.

The building and site, like a valued heirloom, deserve care concern and imagination in every aspect of the renovation. Continuing my longstanding commitment to the urban vitality of this historical corner of the city, I would enjoy the opportunity to put this cornerstone in place for Boston.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Benjamin Thompson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Benjamin Thompson
BENJAMIN THOMPSON & ASSOCIATES



THE STORY OF THE WHYDAH:

Out of the coastal waters of Massachusetts, from the first pirate ship ever salvaged, has come a priceless treasure of gold, silver, gems, and historical artifacts laden with historical interest. The tales of two captains -- the 18th century buccaneer and the modern explorer-salvor -- dramatize the romance and reality of maritime life, trade, and discovery. These stories and materials will be the core exhibits in the proposed Maritime-Whydah Museum.

1. Bellamy's Whydah (1716 - 1717)

In 1716, a 110-foot sailing galley built in England for the slave trade set sail for the West Coast of Africa. In her namesake town of Whydah -- now in Nigeria -- she traded a typical cargo of European manufactures for slaves, gold dust, and ivory. Designed to be sailed or rowed, the Whydah then crossed the Atlantic -- using slaves at the oars during the doldrums -- reaching Jamaica late in the year. There its captain bartered human cargo for silver coins, indigo, quinine and sugar.

The Whydah was headed back to England with its rich bounty when a band of pirates, led by Captain Samual "Black Sam" Bellamy, nabbed it in the windward passage between Hispaniola and Cuba in February, 1717. Sailing the seized ship Sultana and accompanied by a consort sloop named Mary Anne, Bellamy led a pirate gang that had been raiding throughout the West Indies for over a year. After a three-day chase, the pirates -- 180 strong -- boarded and took the Whydah without a fight, persuading or forcing some of her 50-man crew to join the buccaneers. They transferred the Sultana's booty -- 20,000 lbs of silver and gold, plus

10 stolen canons -- to the Whydah, and turned most of the captive sailors loose in the empty ship.

Captain Bellamy's swift new vessel then proceeded to besiege the waters of the Caribbean, coastal Florida and Virginia, while plundering Scottish, British and colonial merchant vessels that traded between Philadelphia, New York, and the West Indies. They took on further sailors and indentured servants along with rich cargoes of all kinds. (Newly recruited pirates were required to sign allegiance to several articles of conduct, calling for total democracy, equal sharing of loot, and peace among comrades. Violators were marooned.)

Continuing north along the colonial coast in April of 1717, the Whydah foundered in a gale within sight of the Cape Cod at Wellfleet where, legend has it, Bellamy's lover Maria Hallett was waiting. Bellamy and most of his 140 crew members were drowned. Of the 102 bodies that washed ashore, according to documents of the day, 50 were black, and nine nationalities were represented -- English, Welsh, Irish, Dutch, German, American Indian, and Jamaican among them. 16 had been prisoners of the pirates.

But -- fortunately for historic records and future explorers -- eight crewmen survived. They were apprehended by the State of Massachusetts, jailed in Boston, and put on trial for theft on the high seas. The detailed testimony of these defendants, preserved in the state archives, provided Barry Clifford's first documentation of the size of the pirate treasure that he had heard about as a young boy.



As for the survivors, six were convicted and publicly hanged at the edge of Boston harbor on November 15, 1717. Their bodies were left to swing for days above the breaking waves as warning to others. Two survivors were acquitted -- they had been defended by Cotton Mather.

2. Clifford's Whydah (1982 - 1988)

Since 1717, a ship commonly called "The Whiddah" has lain like scattered pieces of a puzzle across 150,000 square feet of shoals, most of it under 10 feet of sand, a quarter mile east of Wellfleet. The tale of the destruction of Captain Bellamy's ship, passed from witnesses and scavengers to generation after generation of Cape Codders, became the stuff of legend that inspired fruitless attempt at recovery over two centuries. Bill Carr of Orleans was one of those who attempted to find and salvage the Whydah. In 1952, he told his young nephew Barry Clifford, then aged 8, the Whydah tale. Clifford believed it, and never forgot.

As a young diver, Clifford explored the shifting sands of Cape waters, became interested in shipwrecks, and found himself engaged in archival research to sift fact from fiction and enlarge his knowledge of maritime history. In microfilm, he found testimonies of the surviving pirates on trial in 1717, and that led to the log of Cyrian Southack, a salvor dispatched to claim the Whydah's treasure for the Commonwealth.

Southack's crude map and letters to the Governor provided electrifying evidence that sent Clifford back to the Wellfleet shore, confident that



the Whydah awaited a more imaginative salvage effort than had been made in two and a half centuries.

In 1982, thirty years after hearing his uncle's tale, Barry Clifford began the scientific search of a two-mile area based on a map reconstructed from Southack. He traded his personal assets for high-tech equipment, formed a company, obtained a permit, and went to work in a 70-foot work boat, Vast Explorer II, trolling the area with metal detectors. Not until 1984, following a faint reading, did he find a location that yielded his divers their first authentic find -- a 1684 silver coin from Peru, lying among cannons, musket balls, and many more coins deep in the sand.

Clearing sand with enormous blowers, Clifford's team continued for over a year to bring up booty -- navigational instruments, Spanish pieces of eight, gold bars divided into chunks, wrought gold jewelry of apparent Aztec origin. But public scepticism about the true source of this treasurer continued until October 1985, when the crew retrieved undeniable proof -- a brass bell engraved "The Whydah Galley of 1716." They had captured and identified the only pirate wreck ever found in the entire world.

This discovery of a great archeological site is now bringing the world a singular time capsule -- the only one that can tell us about life aboard a pirate ship -- and on land -- in the Golden Age of Piracy.

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